

Appl. No. 10/517,916
Response to Office Action of March 23, 2006

PATENT
Docket No.: NL020559
Customer No. 000024737

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1 and 2 have been canceled. Claims 3-11 have been amended. New claims 12-22 have been added. Claims 3-22 remain in the application. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found the specification and drawings. No new matter has been added. This application has been carefully considered in connection with the Examiner's Action. Reconsideration, and allowance of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4-6 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims. Allowability of claims 4-6 is noted with appreciation. By this amendment, claims 4, 5 and 6 have each been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 4, 5 and 6 are in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kuebler (US 2,680,236). With respect to claims 1 and 2, the same has been canceled herein, thus rendering the rejection thereof now moot.

With respect to claim 3, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons. By this amendment, claim 3 has been amended to now depend from allowable independent claim 4. Accordingly, claim 3 is allowable and the 102(b) rejection thereof is overcome.

With respect to claim 10, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons. By this amendment, claim 10 has been amended to now

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depend from allowable independent claim 4. Accordingly, claim 10 is allowable and the 102(b) rejection thereof is overcome.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuebler (US 2,680,236). With respect to claim 7, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons. By this amendment, claim 7 has been amended to now depend from allowable independent claim 4. Accordingly, claim 7 is allowable and the 103(a) rejection thereof is overcome.

Claim 8, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuebler in view of Van Duivendijk et al (US 6,465,960). With respect to claims 8, 9 and 11, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons. By this amendment, claims 8, 9 and 11 have been amended to now depend from allowable independent claim 4. Accordingly, claims 8, 9 and 11 are allowable and the 103(a) rejection thereof is overcome.

New claims 12-22 have been added to provide for more complete claim coverage of the embodiments of the present disclosure. Claims 12-17 and 18-22 depend from and further limit independent allowable claims 5 and 6, respectively, and therefore are allowable as well.

Conclusion

Except as indicated herein, the claims were not amended in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights they may have under the Doctrine of Equivalents. Applicants furthermore reserve their right to reintroduce subject matter deleted herein at a later time during the prosecution of this application or a continuation application.

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It is clear from all of the foregoing that independent claims 4, 5 and 6 are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims (3, 5-11), (12-17), and (18-22) depend from and further limit independent claims 4, 5 and 6, respectively, therefore are allowable as well. The amendments herein are fully supported by the original specification and drawings, therefore, no new matter is introduced. An early formal notice of allowance of claims 3-22 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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